

(Mr. Larijani, Islamic Republic of Iran)

complicated. At the beginning of this tragic period chemical warfare was directed against military objectives and targets mainly, but recently the use of chemical weapons on civilian targets has been increased and intensified.

The pattern of progress among these characteristics should indeed be considered alarming to the human community. Should this horrible trend continue, the day will soon arrive when criminal elements may try to use chemical bombs and explosives against airports and cities of other countries. It seems very unreasonable to watch these developments passively and merely feel content with recommending to the civilian populace to carry gas masks in their handbags during their normal shopping and daily work. We think this is a historic moment in the Conference on Disarmament to be more realistic. There is a point of urgency to the matter.

Thanks to the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General, in March 1984, the United Nations produced its first report on the use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war. In April 1985, a second report confirmed the use of chemical weapons against Iranian soldiers. A third report prepared in March 1986 concluded that chemical weapons had been used by Iraqi forces against Iranian positions. But the last report of 8 May 1987, prepared by the team of specialists dispatched by the Secretary-General to both Iran and Iraq, shows a new dimension as regards the violation of international law. In this report the use of chemical weapons against the civilian population is explicitly cited. The specialists report that they visited a whole family, including young children as well as old members of the family, injured by such weapons. The same team also reports on their visit to a two-year-old baby, a victim of mustard gas, who died in front of their very eyes. Needless to say, these are only the incidents known to the team. Numerous others have just slept in history; no cameras present, no team to depict the tragedy of their suffering for future generations, not to mention for the future deliberations of the politicians of the world. The state of ignorance on such an important manner seems to be beyond expectation.

Along the same current of events, just two days ago, on 28 June 1987, Iraqi forces attacked the city of Sardasht. Four residential areas in the city were the target of chemical bombardment. The first report shows more than 10 deaths and more than 650 injuries, mostly children who happen to be more vulnerable and defenceless once exposed to the green and yellowish clouds generated by mustard gas.

It is very essential that we should all for a moment imagine how a child would behave when he cries hard for survival, and with each cry, lumps of this lethal gas are pumped into his lungs. We should also imagine what the desperate mother could do -- prevent the child from breathing, I mean suffocate him, or let her dear one die of mustard gas.

Mr. President, please don't recommend that all children should carry a gas mask in their back-pack; don't recommend that children should stop breathing for a few hours. No, Mr. President, we should do something serious, and right now.